

## EXHIBIT 11

# Articles on Branding and Marketing Efforts of Las Vegas for “Sin City”

(0286-0309)

## EXHIBIT 11

**LAS VEGAS SUN**

# Playboy Bunnies, brothel plan Nevada Day parade entries

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2004 | 9:32 a.m.

SUN CAPITAL BUREAU

CARSON CITY -- Retired Playboy Bunnies and a brothel parade entry will spice up the Nevada Day celebration in the state's capital this weekend.

Women who worked in the Playboy Clubs at anytime from the 1960s through the 1980s will take part in the festivities, including either walking in the parade or riding on the float that will have big bunny ears and a giant tail.

In keeping with the theme of the parade, Entertainment Nevada Style, the Moonlite Bunnyranch also has an entry. The "ranch" is actually a bordello in Lyon County, just outside the boundaries of Carson City. This marks the first time that a brothel has had an entry in the parade, officials said.

Last year the celebration of the state's birthday honored military veterans. Ron Bowman, president of Nevada Day Inc., said "we wanted to lighten it up this year."

Nevada, he said, offers a wide variety of entertainment ranging from gambling, hunting, fishing, stage shows, skiing, horseback riding, rodeos and hiking. And houses of prostitution are legal in some rural counties.

There has been some grumbling about allowing a bordello entry in the parade, but Bowman said he checked with two ordained ministers who said they had no objection to it.

Dennis Hof, owner of the Moonlite Bunny Ranch, said he would drive a convertible in the parade with the female employees in the back.

"We're going to keep it low key. We're going to keep it clean. The girls will be dressed properly."

Hof said he wants to be part of the community and if there were any significant objection to the bordello's participation, he would not be part of the parade. He noted that his business is one of his community's biggest fund-raisers for groups such as libraries, firefighters and children's groups.

The parade grand marshals will be Frank Sinatra Jr. and Lt. Gov. Lorraine Hunt. Bowman said the parade committee hopes to lure more people from Las Vegas for the three-day celebration.

Friday is a holiday and the main celebration is on Saturday. It will include a fun-run, the 200-entry parade, the 30th annual World Champion Single-Jack Hard Rock Drilling Contest, a tribute to Elvis Presley by impersonator Rick Alviti and the Mad Hatter Ball.

Thousands are expected to line the streets for the parade, and there will be a variety of parties later. Gov. Kenny Guinn and Treasurer Brian Krolicki will again sponsor their free chili feed at local casino.

Chere Rae, who worked at the Playboy Club in Hollywood, Calif., said she expects many of the former playboy bunnies to gather for the party. They will be decorating their float Thursday and Friday at the parking lot of a local casino, be in the parade and judge the beard-growing contest.

The Nevada Day celebration kicks off Friday with a golf tournament in the morning. A reception will be held that evening for Sinatra Hunt.

A fly-over by F-18 Hornets from the Naval Air Station in Fallon will signal the start of the parade that moves down Carson City's main street. Other entries in the parade besides the former bunnies and the Bunny Ranch are politicians, bands, beauty queens and various floats.

Guinn will hold an open house at the governor's mansion in the afternoon. There will be a reception for sculptor Benjamin Victor, who is putting the finishing touches on the sculpture of Indian crusader Sarah Winnemucca for the U.S. Capitol's Natural Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C.

Other events include an Elvis competition with about 50 people vying for awards and the traditional 1864 Grand Ball to be held in historic Piper's Opera House in Virginia City.

Nevada was admitted to the Union on Oct. 31, 1864. The Nevada Day parade in Carson City dates to 1938.

State Archivist Guy Rocha said there has been a celebration every year except during World War II. Only Nevada, Hawaii and West Virginia have state holidays that include substantial formal celebrations every year, he said.

The 1997 Legislature decided to make the last Friday of the month a holiday with the hope that a three-day celebration would draw more visitors.

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**LAS VEGAS SUN**

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# Brothel owner launches effort to battle illegal prostitution in Las Vegas

By [Steve Green](#)

Friday, April 24, 2009 | 12:34 p.m.

Chicken Ranch brothel owner Kenneth Green today detailed plans for his new company, Regulated Management LLC, which he said would expose illegal prostitution in Las Vegas and lead a public effort to demand government deal with the problem.

The company also unveiled a Web site on the effort, [www.regulatedmanagement.com](http://www.regulatedmanagement.com). Green noted he has a financial interest in a crackdown on the illegal sex trade since his legal brothel is 60 miles away in Nye County.

"I have a vested interest and that's why I'm stepping forward," he said.

He said it's frustrating that in one sense, Nevada "gets it," as it has a system of legal, regulated brothels in rural counties. Yet in the most populous counties, Clark and Washoe -- home to Las Vegas and Reno -- it's illegal.

But asked if one of the goals of the business is having prostitution legalized in Clark and Washoe counties, Green said: "That's not my job. That's the Legislature's job."

Regulated Management says the illegal sex trade in Las Vegas is a multibillion dollar, untaxed and unregulated industry that is an embarrassment to the community with residents and tourists exposed to the likes of "Hot Babes Direct to Your Room" advertising, smut racks and the aggressive passing out of sex industry business cards to pedestrians on the Las Vegas Strip.

"What is most frustrating is that everyone acknowledges its existence, but all too many turn a 'blind eye' to it and fail to take action," Green said.

## New effort targets illegal prostitution in LV



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April 25, 2009 - 9:00 pm



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For advocates of legalized prostitution in Las Vegas, it was like a scene out of a dream: a licensed brothel owner and a card-carrying prostitute openly holding court inside a casino on the Strip.

But Chicken Ranch owner Kenneth Green and his employee, a self-described “courtesan” named Alexis, weren’t working during Friday’s news conference in a Sahara banquet room, not working in the strict sense of the word anyway.

Green and Alexis were there to promote Regulated Management, a mostly Web-based enterprise the longtime brothel owner just launched to generate

community discussion and bring an end to illegal prostitution in Las Vegas.

The company's Web site features poll questions, online petitions and links to send e-mails to state lawmakers. Each month, organizers plan to post a new "white paper" examining the negative effects of the illicit sex trade.

"It's no secret. It's a wide open, rampant criminal enterprise that's been allowed to operate in Las Vegas," Green said.

He hopes to generate enough public outcry to give lawmakers the "political cover" they need to take decisive action, though he would not say what action he recommends.

Instead, Green and company insisted that they are not advocating legalization or any other specific solution in Las Vegas. Much of what they had to say, however, strongly hinted at a push to open the city to legal brothels.

"I would love to see Las Vegas become ... the adult entertainment capital of the world," said Regulated Management board member Loretta Holt, who also works on behalf of many local adult-oriented businesses as executive director of the Sin City Chamber of Commerce.

"Legal prostitution isn't the problem in our society. It's illegal prostitution that's the problem," Green said.

Regulated Management spokesman Bob Fisher said the company and its Web site have been in the works nine months.

The mission is a daunting one. Illegal prostitution is "a multibillion-dollar industry in Las Vegas, and that's with a B, not an M," said Fisher, who has done public relations work for the Chicken Ranch since Green bought it in 1982.

Brothel industry lobbyist George Flint also sits on the new company's board.

Reached by phone at his Reno wedding chapel Friday, Flint said he met with state and local officials last year in hopes of floating a bill that would allow legal brothels in Clark County. The measure never saw the light of day.

Flint acknowledged he is a little fuzzy on the details of what Regulated Management aims to do, but he insists it's not a veiled attempt at publicity for the Chicken Ranch, as some have suggested.

Green freely admits that he is targeting his largest competitor, but he also views illegal prostitution as a threat to the community at large.

“Of course I have a vested interest,” he said. “But does that take away from the fact that it’s a legitimate issue?”

Contact reporter Henry Brean at [hbrean@reviewjournal.com](mailto:hbrean@reviewjournal.com) or 702-383-0350.

## Sin City chamber means business

April 16, 2007 - 9:00 pm



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When members of the Sin City Chamber of Commerce get together Friday and Saturday for the group's spring golf tournament and barbecue, attendees can expect a networking-heavy atmosphere similar to the milieu at any business function.

Except for the bikini contest.

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And the cocktail party at the brothel.

And the strip club sponsor.

And the fundraising drive for the sex workers' charity.

"From the sound of it, people may get the indication that it's like a singles' meeting thing, but it's far from it," said David Sutton, president of adult-movie seller VCX.com, which owns 350 classic titles including "The Devil in Miss Jones" and "Debbie Does Dallas."

VCX.com is also one of the golf tournament's, um, hole sponsors.

"It's basically an opportunity for members to meet other members who can help them out in their business endeavors at some point," Sutton said. "We want to go out there and press the flesh, and let everybody know who we are."

The Spring Golf Classic and Third Annual Spring Barbecue is the biggest event thrown by the Sin City Chamber of Commerce. The chamber, established in July 2004, is a trade group for adult-oriented companies denied membership in more mainstream chambers, said Michael Russell, the organization's executive vice president and partner.

The chamber has about 500 members, 15 percent of whom are involved in adult or alternative industries, Russell said. The rest are a mix of attorneys, real estate agents, caterers, insurance companies, dentists, car dealers, banks, chiropractors and other professionals looking to peddle services to workers in the adult-business sector.

The Sin City Chamber's broad appeal is evident in the names attached to the hole sponsorships and exhibit booths at the upcoming barbecue and golf tournament.

Sure, there are eyebrow raisers such as Deja Vu Gentlemen's Club, but local business mainstays can be found, including Findlay Volkswagen, BMW Motorcycles of Las Vegas and Southern Wine & Spirits of Nevada.

“Networking is the main factor” behind Southern Wine & Spirits’ hole sponsorship and barbecue attendance, said Micheal Sussen, a division manager with the liquor distributor. “We’re looking for brand exposure, and we want to get our name and our brands out there. I hope it will grow our contacts in the future.”

With golfing and grilling (and gripping and grinning), the two-day event will include hot-air balloon rides, a bikini contest, a cocktail party Friday night at the Chicken Ranch, a car show and carnival games.

Some of the proceeds from gift-bag sales, balloon rides and the barbecue will go toward the Desire Alliance, a nonprofit that lobbies for the rights of workers in the sex industry, and The Center, a gay-rights group. The chamber has booked a block of rooms at the Pahrump Nugget hotel and casino.

Organizers are expecting as many as 500 attendees throughout the weekend.

“It really feels just like a county fair except that you won’t see any children,” Russell said. “It’s about fun, it’s about networking, and it’s about meeting

people.”

It's also a chance for adult-themed businesses to track down companies that will perform services for them, Sutton said.

Owners of adult businesses must pay taxes, balance the books and buy insurance like any other enterprise. It can be tough to find business partners: VCX.com lost its liability insurance in early 2007 when its policy provider discovered the nature of the company's line of work and refused to renew coverage, Sutton said.

“The nice thing about the Sin City Chamber of Commerce is that you have access to the infrastructure that any business needs,” he said. “You don't have to go through the rigmarole of trying to find a bank to lend you money and, at the end of the game, have them tell you, ‘Oh, we didn't realize you were an adult company, and our charter doesn't allow us to do business with you.’”

Through the Sin City Chamber of Commerce, VCX.com has found a new insurer.

Sutton has met attorneys useful to his business, and he credited publicity he has received through the group for boosting his business. An interview that appeared on European television led to a 20 percent jump in sales for about two weeks after the talk aired, he said.

The Sin City Chamber of Commerce doesn't confine its events to brothel barbecues. Like any chamber, it has breakfast meetings, monthly mixers and a holiday party with an accompanying toy drive.

The chamber has held Botox parties, and on May 18, its Sin City Sky Dive for Charity will raise money for the Corps of Compassion, which collects money to feed homeless children.

For sheer frivolity, though, nothing beats the spring barbecue, Sutton said.

“Regular chamber of commerce events might have (bars), but it’s a little more fun when prostitutes are serving the drinks,” he said.

There’s still time to register for the golf tournament and barbecue. Members of the Sin City Chamber of Commerce will pay \$115 to play golf and \$10 to participate in the barbecue. Nonmembers must pay \$150 to enter the golf tournament and \$50 to attend the barbecue. The registration deadline is Thursday at noon.

“We just want our members to have fun,” Russell said. “If our members are having fun, they’re getting business out of the people they’re having fun with.”

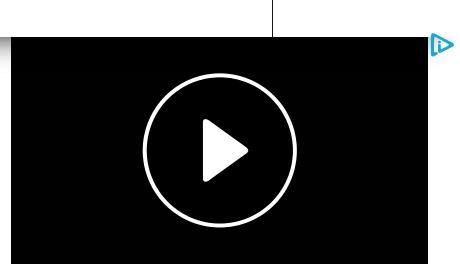
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(PLUS: Read Piers' own hilarious account of his visit to Las Vegas below . . .)

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UPDATED: 03:15 EDT, 27 December 2009

91

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He may be a happily engaged man, but that didn't stop Piers Morgan eloping to Vegas to 'marry' a blonde 16 years his junior.

And his bride? The socialite hotel heiress Paris Hilton.

In typical Vegas style, Mr Morgan, who announced his engagement to writer Celia Walden only two weeks ago, got 'hitched' under the watchful eyes of an Elvis impersonator, a Marilyn Monroe lookalike and several Rat Pack mimics.

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**What will Celia say? Piers Morgan puts a ring on Paris Hilton's finger as they 'wed' in Las Vegas to publicise his new TV show**

Mr Morgan, 44, joked of his 'Sin City' wedding: 'You know what it's like - you have a few drinks, spend too long on the blackjack table, get over-excited and decide to do something silly.'

'I have to say, Paris scrubbed up to be a beautiful bride. It was magical.'

However, given The Mail on Sunday columnist's reputation for self-promotion, it will come as little surprise to discover that the wedding was staged for his forthcoming ITV1 show.



© Splash News

**Uncomfortable: Paris and Piers lean in for an unconvincing kiss**

Although the 15-minute service at the Little Church of the West was not official, there were times when the Britain's Got Talent judge feared it may have gone too far.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1238559/Piers-Morgan-Paris-Hilton-say-I-Las-Vegas-.html>

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'Well, I don't think I signed anything, so I'm pretty sure it's not actually legal,' he said.

'Having said that, we did go through all the vows, so I can't be entirely sure.'

Miss Hilton, 28, wore an Enzoani ivory dress for the ceremony, and was given a diamond-encrusted ring by Mr Morgan.



© Jan Knapik/Splash

**The new Mrs Morgan: Piers and Paris celebrate their 'union' with their famous witnesses, including Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley**

They met in a hotel room beforehand and chatted on the bed for the ITV show *Piers Morgan On...Las Vegas*, which airs on Saturday.

Miss Hilton said: 'You can do anything here, it's crazy. What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas!'

In real life, Mr Morgan proposed to Ms Walden, the daughter of former Tory MP George Walden, earlier this month, during a romantic stay in Paris.

But Ms Walden took the Vegas wedding in her stride.

'When I told her the news, she just shrugged her shoulders sadly and said, "How can I ever compete with Paris Hilton?",' Mr Morgan said.

Mr Morgan - who last year divorced Marion Shalloe, his wife of 17 years and mother of his three sons - has been dating Ms Walden for four years, after falling for her when he interviewed her for men's magazine *GQ*.

Mr Morgan, who has an estimated £15million fortune, recently spent £4million on a five-bedroom house in Kensington, West London - buying it from Ms Walden's father.



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The 37-year-old strolled in beige platform heels



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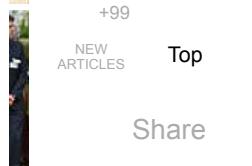
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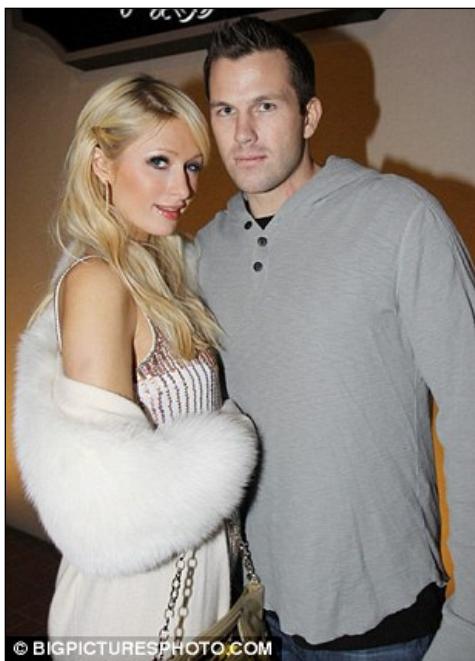


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Real-life lovers: Paris with current boyfriend Doug Reinhardt (left) and Piers with his fiancée Celia Walde

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Maturity's almost a crime... if you are not irresponsible in Vegas, they'll sling you in jail

Now read Piers' own hilarious account of his visit to Las Vegas...

What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,' wrote advertising slogan writers Jeff Candido and Jason Hoff in 2002 at the behest of the Las Vegas Convention and Tourism Authority.

And in just seven words, the allure of the world's greatest party playground was simply, yet brilliantly articulated.

The message was clear: this is a place where you buy yourself a passport to naughtiness. But then the recession hit Vegas with all the speed and vengeance of a tsunami.

It's no exaggeration to say that the credit crunch has threatened the very existence of Sin City.

It's become America's version of Dubai, a desert paradise that collapsed the moment a lot of rich men lost all their money in the economic meltdown.

In 2007, gambling revenue was \$12billion a year - now it's down more than 30 per cent. The value of houses and apartments has plummeted by more than 50 per cent, while some desperate hotel owners have been forced to slash



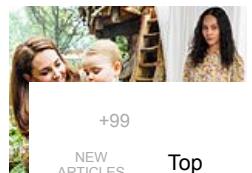
► Model Ngoc Trinh causes a stir on the Cannes Film Festival red carpet as she bares almost all in a VERY revealing dress at A Hidden Life premiere



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their rates by even more.

All this has left the city that was built on sand looking like a city that was built on sand - ready to sink at any moment.

And the casino owners who borrowed billions to erect this fantasy world, and who have spent decades winning, winning and winning again, have found themselves, to their horror, staring defeat in the face.

I spent ten days investigating the reality behind the neon-lit facade of Vegas for ITV1 and found the cliches are true, the surprises are numerous, and the threats to its survival genuine.

I'll be honest, I've never been a massive fan of the place, but then I've only been here to film the bootcamp stage of America's Got Talent for a week each year. And working in 100 degree sunshine while everyone else is playing isn't my idea of fun.

But in the time I spent filming my documentary, I finally got the chance to enjoy many (not all, I hasten to add) of the delights Vegas offers. And I began to see it in a different light.

The bottom line seems to be that if you come here with money you can afford to lose, and spend it like a madman on a long weekend of pure self-indulgence, then you're going to have a fantastically entertaining time.

But come here with money that you can't afford to squander, and it will quickly become how Hunter S. Thompson so brilliantly described it: 'For a loser, Vegas is the meanest town on Earth.'

It's only the 28th most populous metropolis in America, but is by far the most popular. Millions swarm here every year - and it is not for the sand. It's become a hedonistic mecca for party-goers. A place for the overworked, stressed-out and fed-up to escape on a pilgrimage of debauchery and frivolity.

Vegas is where people go to blow their cash, recklessly get married, frequent strip clubs (and worse), watch sport, see the biggest stars, drink too much and feel guilty afterwards. As Oscar Goodman, its splendidly liberal and pugnacious mayor, told me: 'I like Vegas to operate on the cusp of legality.'

Most of the action occurs in a four-mile area known as The Strip, lined with 15 of the world's 20 largest, glitziest hotels which create such a dazzling spectacle that, as seen from space, Vegas is officially the brightest city on Earth.

And you can indulge any fantasy - from sleeping in a lifesize Egyptian pyramid to eating in a replica of the Eiffel Tower and taking a gondola ride. My favourite suite was one at The Palms that housed an almost full-size basketball court. For \$25,000 a night, you can shoot hoops to your heart's content.

The only part of the bargain you have to adhere to is spending money - as much of it as the casinos can possibly wrench from your wallet.

Ah, yes, the casinos. They're the heart of Vegas - vast, pumping, noisy, 24-hour, air-conditioned, brightly-lit arcades of slot machines, roulette wheels and crap tables.

For decades, they were run by the Mafia and endorsed by the world's biggest stars, such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. Today, they're run by legitimate businessmen but the superstars still come - Elton John, Barbra Streisand, Cher and Celine Dion have all headlined here recently.

## What really happens in Vegas: Piers Morgan is the ideal man to explore what goes on in the garish and glitzy city

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Pair duked it out over their buddy

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Enjoying French break



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What's slowly begun to change, however, is the business model. From pure Sin City, offering booze, drugs, gambling and sex, to a more refined Sexy City, offering a less sleazy but just as exciting family-orientated, high-end entertainment resort.

The casinos remain, though, the focal point of activity. And their number one target is the 'whale', that rare monstrous gambling creature who likes to bet millions on the flip of a card.

They're superrich, fearless, and often gamble purely for the thrill of the game --not caring if they win or lose. This makes them dangerous, but irresistible. And the casinos will go to any lengths to catch them.

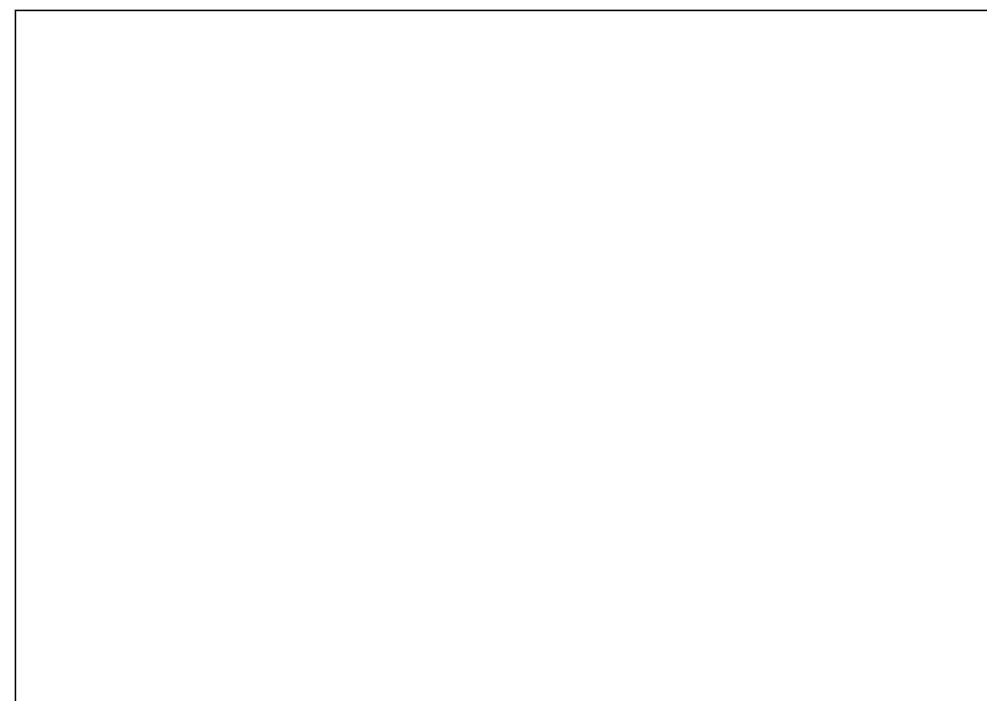
Every casino employs whalecatchers, people whose only job is to hunt down the biggest players and lure them into their place instead of a rival casino.

They're unscrupulous, cunning, ruthless and highly amusing.

The Hard Rock's Steve Cyr is reputed to be the chief harpooner in Vegas. He will do whatever it takes to win a new client, offering them free flights, luxury suites, female company, ANYTHING.

'I was kicked out of the billionaire Hustler magazine tycoon Larry Flynt's office ten times,' he laughed, 'but then I finally got to him by sending him a fruit basket every Monday morning for 18 months.

Then I didn't do it one week and he called to ask where his fruit was. I said that instead of fruit, I'd give him £100,000 to walk into my casino. So he did.'



#### **Morgan spent ten days investigating the reality behind the neon-lit facade of Las Vegas**

And did that strategy work? 'Not really. On his first stay here he won \$1.7million and I nearly got fired. But by the end of his 20th trip, I was up \$5million on him.'

Steve also kicked Bill Gates out of his best suite because he wasn't spending much money and a highroller had come into town.

'I had to make a business decision. Mr Gates was spending \$10,000 a night, but the guy arriving would be spending a million. So Mr Gates had to leave, and fast.'



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Pair are filming together in Bean Town



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The speech drew cheers and jeers

► **Whitney Houston's estate unveils plans for a hologram tour... seven years after singer's death at age 48**  
Her band and backup singers will perform

► **Kate gets her hands dirty! Duchess dresses down in culottes as she joins schoolchildren to climb a treehouse and roast marshmallows in flower show garden**

► **Model Demi Rose barely contains her modesty in an eye-watering white bikini as she saunters around her regal Tunisian hotel**

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► **Rihanna used herself as the ultimate muse and took inspiration from her 'thick and curvy' figure as she unveils peeks of her luxury Fenty fashion line**

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**Georgia May Jagger and beau Louis Levy put on loved-up display as they take a romantic stroll in New York**

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Steve admits his dream punter is the 'happy loser'. 'I want a guy to drop \$100,000 in a night but have such a good time doing it that he shakes my hand and asks me when the next event is. Some people want to travel the world and some want to risk money gambling.'

But the recession has hit the whales harder than most. Steve says: 'The guys who might have won \$40,000 in a night before and happily gambled it away again will cash in their chips now and go home with their winnings. And everyone wants more complimentary stuff - not just a room, but food, drinks, a spa ... We're pretty much buying business at the moment. Everywhere's the same. You can stay on The Strip for \$59 a night in a room that would have cost you \$259 a night a year ago.'

The really high-rollers don't bother with hotels, however. They head to a secret emporium of luxury called The Mansion, buried in the bowels of the MGM Grand. It's an astonishing, tranquil haven with 29 stupendously lavish villas served by 175 staff.

You can guzzle 1961 Chateau Latour, scoff lobster, entertain stunning models by your private pool or even eat your favourite pizza from back home (they flew a private jet to Chicago once to pick up a client's preferred pepperoni). And it's all free.

The only twist is that you need to have a credit line of at least £500,000 to step through the doors, and be prepared to blow it all in the casino. The guests are therefore multi-millionaires or billionaires. The best-loved ones are repeat customers because their chances of winning are self-evidently smaller than those who come just once.

I met one MGM casino boss, a small, smart, attractive woman called Debbie. She's as far removed from the caricature of the old scar-faced gangster casino boss as you could imagine. But that sweet little smile belied a ruthless mind.

She explained the psychology of the whales. 'We get some of the richest men in the world here. Most whales are male, and they tend to be very competitive and love the challenge of taking on the casino to either win or lose big. I think for many of them it's not really about the money, it's more about that challenge.'

'And to keep them coming back, it's in our interests that they win occasionally. If you never win, you'd eventually get so disgusted you'd never come back.'

What about the dangers of gambling addiction?

'It is addictive, definitely. But my view is that if they're addicted but their bank credit roll can withstand it, that's fine,' says Debbie. 'We have had people come in and win or lose up to \$10million in one night. But over the year, the odds of the games stay the same, so you have peaks and valleys but the end result is fairly consistent.'

Does anyone ever beat the casino on a regular basis? 'Yes, I know one guy, an American, who is an unbeatable player. It's a mixture of skill and luck but he is really good.'

'Do you dread him coming in?' 'Yes!'

Every gambler is watched through The Bubble, a secret surveillance operation with dozens of cameras linked to a control room monitoring every single hand dealt or wheel spun. As an extra back-up, The Bubble is linked to a Nevada Gaming Control centre, which can beam into any table in Vegas at any time.

► The model, 27 and her restaurant owner beau,

► Charlotte McKinney shows off her incredible physique in skimpy blue vest and matching mini skirt as she cozies up to beau Nathan Kosteckho

► Revealed: Meghan shared online chats with UK X-Factor winner Matt Cardle and asked him to meet her in person just months before romance with Prince Harry

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► Elle Fanning is every inch the Hollywood beauty as she rocks chic monochrome ensemble and red heels during Cannes Film Festival

► Georgia governor mocks 'C-list celebrities' who have threatened not to film movies and TV in his state if nation's strictest anti-abortion law isn't repealed

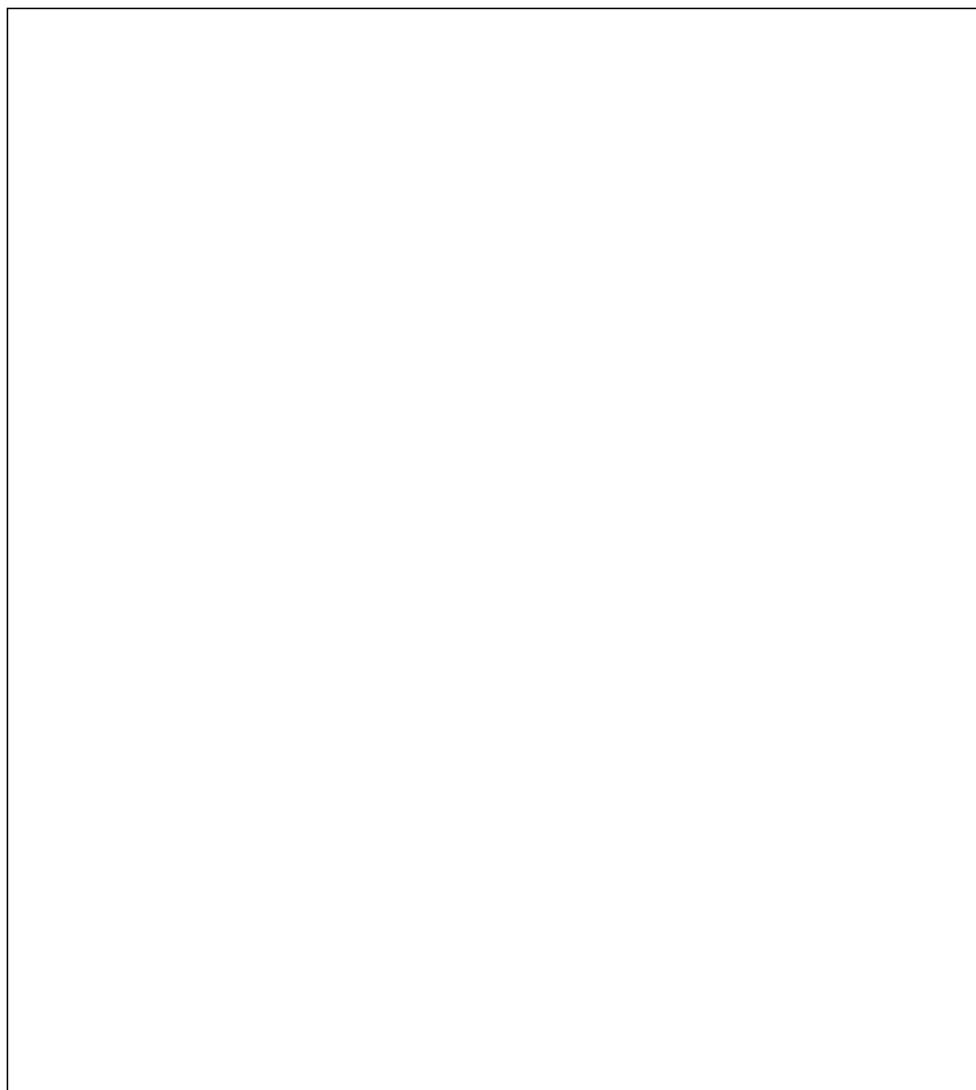
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#### Piers interviewed Paris Hilton on the bed of his suite before their Las Vegas 'wedding'

The new enemy of the casinos is likely to be a spotty 19-year-old computer nerd with a brilliant ability to count cards.

'We get these well-dressed, well-educated kids who are nothing like the stereotypical card-counter, and they're very smart,' says Debbie.

'We just have to be smarter than them. The computer generation is much smarter and more savvy than previous generations of gamblers, and they are keeping us on our toes.' In the end, though, the casino will always win because it has its own rules to ensure it does. It can ban anyone it wants, at any time. 'If we know we have no chance of winning against someone, then we are allowed to refuse them service,' Debbie admits.

But that's just bad sportsmanship, isn't it?

'Yes, I am a bad sport. Terrible in fact. But that's good business.'

And they need all the help they can get to maintain that 'good business'.

British tycoon Robert Earl, chairman of Planet Hollywood, has seen profits from his Vegas operation severely dented by the recession.

'It's been an unmitigated disaster,' he told me. 'Vegas has been hit harder than anywhere else in the world, way beyond anything we could have predicted. And it

**pattered dress as she awards funding to 12 social projects in Madrid**

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► **Sienna Miller** keeps things casual in yellow striped culottes while strolling on a solo outing in New York City. Actress, 37, dressed down

► **Formula One** motor racing star **Jenson Button**'s pregnant fiancée **Britney Ward** shows off her baby bump in stunning naked photo

► **James Norton** looks effortlessly cool in a black mac coat and indigo jeans as he arrives in Nice alongside a female pal for Cannes Film Festival

► **Meg Ryan** beams with fiance **John Mellencamp** on romantic weekend in NYC

The pair appeared to be in a great mood in the Big Apple

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happened almost overnight. Businesses suddenly cancelled their conferences, holidaymakers cancelled their holiday. America reacted to the downturn very quickly. But the good news for British tourists is that it's never been cheaper to come here.'

And why should they come? 'Because everything is geared to escapism. If you think how screwed up the world is at the moment and the pressure everyone is under trying to pay the mortgage, get a job or whatever, then a quick trip to Vegas is a chance to forget everything for a few days and have some fun - get a little intoxicated, see a few naughty shows, gamble, get into the party spirit. What's so bad with that?'

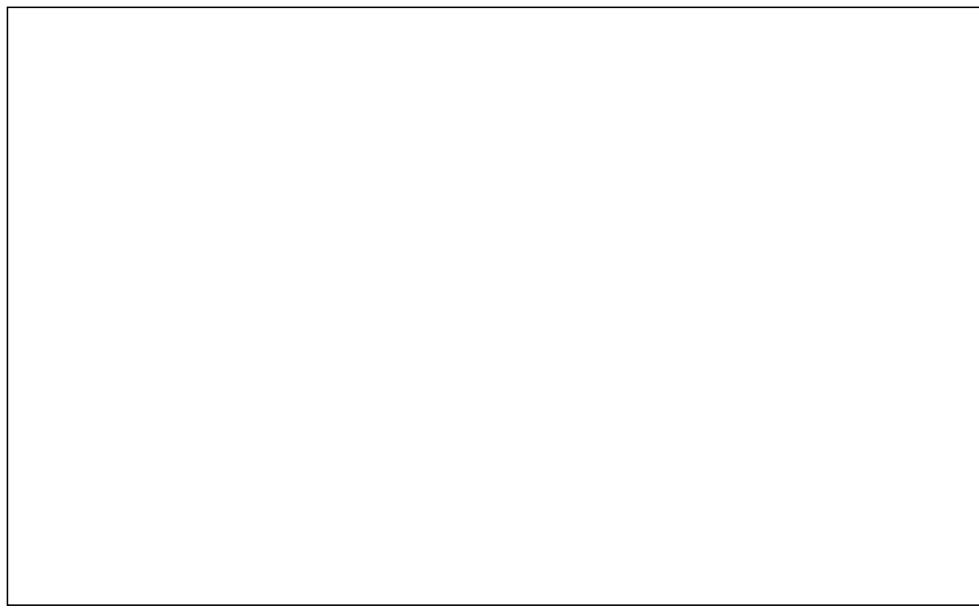
Vegas is definitely changing tack. Robert explained: 'Ten years ago it was all about free food, rooms, cheap entertainment and gambling. Now it's a third entertainment, a third rooms, and a third gambling. The business model has changed.'

'Should we feel sorry for you in this current crisis?' I asked.

'No!' 'Will you show mercy to the punters when the good times come back?'

'No!' 'How long will it take for those good times to return?'

'I think quite a long time. I am confident Vegas will survive the recession, but if you ask me when it will thrive again, I think that will take years. Real estate has been wiped out - you can buy a \$20million home for \$4million right now.'



#### The high life: Morgan took in the sights of Las Vegas in a helicopter flight over the city

Jim Murren, boss of the biggest casino chain, the MGM Grand, was equally honest. 'We've had a brutal year, on top of a brutal year last year. We used to make \$2.5billion a year - now we're down to \$1.3billion. People are coming in smaller numbers, not as often as they did before, and spending less money when they do get here.'

Murren believes it is essential that Vegas cleans up its act to safeguard its financial future. 'This place was founded on sleaze.'

People came here for strippers, gambling and drinking - it was the ultimate den of iniquity for many Americans. But as we've expanded our audience to the Europeans and British in particular, it's no longer the best sales pitch because you guys don't like the sleaze to be quite so obvious.'

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King's Speech actor, 58, and film producer wife

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Spotted crossing a city street in NYC

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The actress, 44, looked every inch the chic star

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Oscar-winning actress enjoyed time with family

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Family has paid tribute to her

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'And the fact is that entertainment now brings in three times as much revenue as gambling in Vegas. This city used to be where gamblers went holidaying - now it's where holidaymakers might gamble.'

One of the other, more hidden, threats to the future of Vegas is water, or rather the lack of it. The water line by the great Hoover Dam that feeds 90 per cent of Nevada's water supply has plunged by 120ft in ten years.

One official told me that if the drought continued in the same pattern, the situation would be 'catastrophic-within eight years, and Vegas could literally run out of water. Desperate rescue plans are now being drawn up.

'All the casino resorts and property developers here have ignored for decades the obvious fact we live in the desert, it's hot as hell, and the water's declining,' says Murren. 'It's a big problem that we have to deal with.'

Another 'problem' that has to be dealt with is sleaze. There has to be more of it per square foot in Vegas than anywhere else in the world.

One of the most laughable claims in Vegas is that prostitution is illegal. I've been to a lot of sleazy places (purely in the interests of journalistic rigour, you understand) but I've never seen so many hookers in one small place as in Vegas.

On The Strip you'll be besieged by tubby men wearing shirts saying 'Girl in your room in 20 minutes' and handing you business cards showing women in various states of undress. Of course, the one who turns up in your room will almost certainly look considerably less desirable than the one on the card.

Business has been bad for the world's oldest profession. 'We've all had to cut our rates,' said a breezy young prostitute. 'In the good times, I could get a thousand dollars for going out to dinner with a client. Now I'd be lucky to get five hundred.'

'Is Vegas conducive to marriage?' She laughed. 'I think if you're coming here without your wife, that's not a good thing.'

'So what would your advice be to a British wife or girlfriend whose man is planning a trip to Vegas?'

'Don't let them come. I don't care if they say they're coming for a convention or to play golf, they're lying. I've been on the golf course serving them drinks topless while they hit balls. This is a city where 90 per cent of the women are beautiful and there are more strip clubs than anywhere on Earth.'

'How much illicit sex is going on here right now?' I asked, as our limo patrolled The Strip.

'Probably unlimited.' And drugs? 'They're everywhere,' said one party organiser, 'and the Brits are the worst offenders when it comes to wanting narcotics.'

Armed with all this, I went to confront Mayor Goodman. He used to be a top lawyer for the mob, so it was no real surprise to hear him declare: 'I like Las Vegas to operate on the cusp of legality.'

How near to that cusp, exactly? 'Well, on the one hand I recognise there is a moral, religious and feminist aspect to prostitution and a lot of my constituents are therefore very covetous of not having prostitution legalised here.'

But on the other hand, I have the casino owners telling me if prostitution was legalised, they would fill their magnificent palaces, it would be a giant brothel and business in Vegas would boom.

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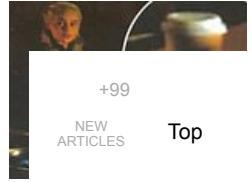
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'I think most people are smart enough to see there are some very pretty women here probably engaging in the world's oldest profession already, and many of these women are already being degraded by pimps manipulating their lives with no concern for their health or safety. As for drugs, they are available everywhere, not just in Vegas.'

I asked the Mayor if British tourists should still see it as Sin City. 'I hope so,' he chuckled. 'I think we've had empirical studies done showing that four per cent of businessmen are deterred from coming here because of the naughty image, but 96 per cent come because they like it.'

'If people want to see Mickey Mouse, then they can see as much Mickey as they want 175 miles down the road at Disneyland. But if they want to see Bugsy Siegel under a rock, come here.'

But towards the end of our encounter, Mayor Goodman sold the Vegas concept better than anyone else I met: 'We are the tourist destination of the world - we've got the most beautiful girls, the greatest restaurants, the biggest casinos, the most wonderful boutique retail shopping, and the greatest shows on Earth. Vegas needs people, but people need Vegas.'



**High rollers: Piers and Sylvester Stallone, who went gambling together at Planet Hollywood**

And he's right. They do. My favourite interview of the show came from an old friend, Sylvester Stallone. He flew in from Los Angeles to go gambling with me in Planet Hollywood, a company in which he owns a stake. But he cheerfully admits to being a 'terrible gambler'.

He's so bad that, before Rocky transported him to super-stardom, he came to Vegas, lost 32 hands in a row playing blackjack at the MGM Grand casino, and was so enraged at dropping the princely sum of \$62 that he threw his toys out of the pram and accused the dealer of cheating. He was promptly banned for years.

'It was embarrassing,' he admitted. Yet he comes back five or six times a year. 'I love Vegas because it's where you can still be like a big kid when you're here. It's a giant, vulgar, loud, exploitative playground for adults, and you feel like it's almost a duty to party here. Maturity is almost a crime - if you're not shamelessly irresponsible then they'll sling you in jail.'

'You can find anything you want here: you want King Kong in your suite, you'll have a 50ft ape by noon, no problem. I once asked for an elephant, and they got me one in

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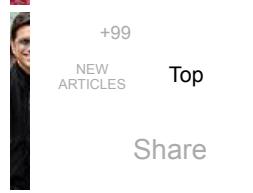
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a few hours. In the middle of the desert. But the guy next to me was riding a camel and pulling a chariot so I didn't feel too weird.'

Stallone revealed his perfect Vegas schedule when he was a young, single star. 'I'd be on the Dracula diet, where you sleep all day and stay up all night, and never feel like eating because stopping for dinner killed all the fun. I'd go to a Muhammad Ali fight in my white disco suit with collar open and chains everywhere.'

Then I'd jump into a limo with Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Charlie Sheen and Don Johnson and go to all these raucous places and have fun doing crazy stuff until 5am. Then I'd finally collapse, wake up in the afternoon, look in the mirror and see my grandfather staring back at me!'

As if to confirm his terrible gambling skills, Sly and I played five spins of roulette for the cameras, and he lost every one betting on red. Then his wife Jennifer arrived, stuck a load of chips on red, and won first time.

Yet Sly still thinks it would be dreadful if Vegas ever shut down. 'Oh my God, it would be a tragedy of epic proportions. We're talking about universal mourning here. Everyone would be in tears wondering where the hell they're going to go for fun in future.'

Comedienne Joan Rivers has been performing in Vegas for 40 years. 'Audiences come from all over the world, so if a joke works here then you can be pretty sure it will work everywhere.'

I asked her what the magic of Vegas was. 'The excitement, the glitter, the fun. Where else can you walk through hotels at 9am and see such energy and over-the-top nouveau-riche glamour?'

'For performers, it's like coming to one giant cocktail party. In the old days, I'd hang out with Sinatra, Dean Martin, Streisand, Elvis. Now it's Elton, Bette Midler and Cher. We all love it here because everyone loves you if you're a star. You walk through a hotel lobby and they rush up to tell you how much they love you. Everyone's happy - I bet the sex is great in this town.'

That evening, I met Demi Moore's husband, Ashton Kutcher, on a hotel rooftop, where he was painting a mural of a slot machine with a famous German street artist. Exactly the kind of weird spectacle that goes on all the time in Vegas. I asked him what he thought of the city's slogan.

'It's a myth,' he replied. 'Created by Vegas to promote Vegas.'

'What's the reality? 'The reality is that someone's always watching you here.'

Kutcher also gave the best summary of the right mental approach to Vegas. 'I've never lost money here,' he said.

'Really? How come?' 'Because if you leave with less money than you came with, then you need to understand that you paid for some entertainment, whether it's through

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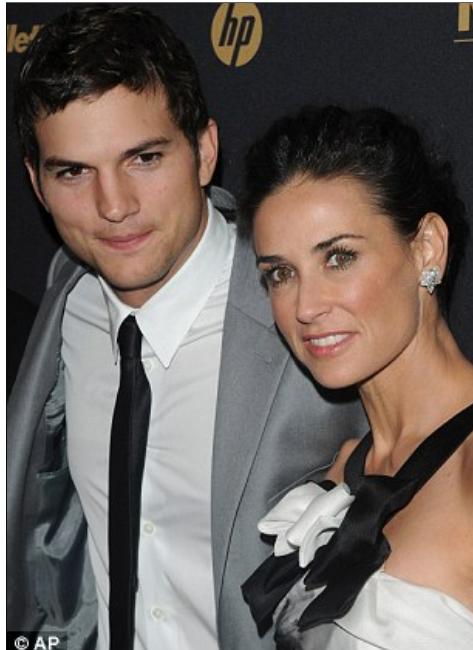
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Ashton Kutcher, pictured with wife Demi Moore, has the perfect mental approach to Vegas

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Fans shared their diverse reactions

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gambling or a show or whatever. And then you've had your money's worth, so you don't lose a thing.'

And that, surely, is the only way to view Vegas if you want to come away with a smile on your face.

Either that or do what I did and get 'married' to Paris Hilton in one of the tiny wedding chapels which adorn The Strip, where everyone from Bob Geldof to Britney Spears and Angelina Jolie has fled down the aisle for a few hundred dollars.

'What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,' sighed Paris as we clutched hands by the altar.

Hmmm, I thought, try telling that to Tiger Woods.

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## PICTURED: Father whose unborn baby was cut from his murdered wife's womb cuddles him in the hospital as he clings to life

Yovani Lopez is the widower of Marlen Ochoa-Lopez, a 19-year-old who was strangled on April 23 after going to a house in Chicago to pick up free baby clothes.

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